

# Sermon for A Year with the Catechism The Sixth Commandment

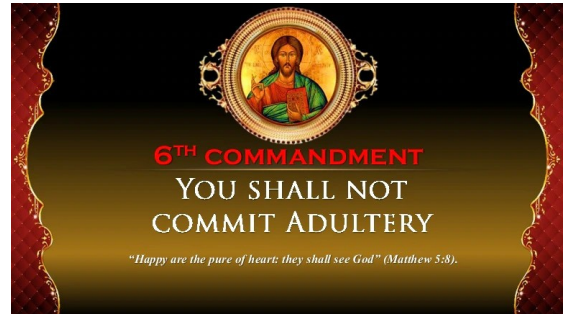
**Date:** October 17, 2021

**Location:** St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

**Old Testament:** Proverbs 7:1-27

**Epistle Reading:** Ephesians 5:6-21

**Gospel Reading:** John 8:1-11



**Sermon Text:** Exodus 20:14

**Sermon Title:** The Sixth Commandment

**Introit:** Psalm 111:1-5,9; Antiphon: Psalm 111:10

## Hymns:

LSB 861 – Christ Be My Leader

LSB 581 – These are the Holy Ten Commands  
(v. 1,7, 11-12)

LSB 862 – Oh, Blest the House

LSB 867 – Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds

LSB 865 – Lord Help us Ever to Retain

## Songs:

Broken Things - Matthew West

Broken Together - Casting Crowns  
(With Intro)

Agnus Dei - Koine

By Our Love

Forgiveness - Matthew West

## Liturgy:

Divine Service IV, p. 203

## Liturgy:

Creative Worship



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**Text: Exodus 20:14**

You shall not commit adultery.

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In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Commandment about adultery seems to get a lot more attention than many of the other nine commandments. The consequences for breaking this commandment would appear to be more serious than some of the others. Breaking this commandment destroys a marriage that God wants to last forever. It hurts children, and bring distrust and disruption to people's homes. There's another reason this commandment gets more attention. Adultery can be fun. Why else would it be so popular? Perhaps because it does, for a short time, make a person feel better.

But... (There's always a "but." There's always an "however.") the guilt, the shame, the self-questioning that follows is far more painful than the brief joy, comfort, or fun the sinning appeared to provide. There are consequences that ruin people's lives. There are consequences that ruin families and hurt children. It is that perceived pleasure that makes this one of the most popular sins of our time, and turns it into one of the most despised sins of our time.

This sin might be the most attractive. It might be the most appealing. It is also one of the most embarrassing when you get caught. It is one of the most destructive when the truth comes out. With all of the pain that breaking this commandment can cause, you might wonder, is there anything good in what we can say, when discussing this commandment?

Martin Luther is our example and guide. He says this commandment means:

We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

You see the real key is that love and honor, that respect between people, most especially between a man and woman who are, or will be, married.

St. Paul helps us understand this when he teaches us we should be:

addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup>

Then Paul continues using marriage as the example he says:

submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.<sup>2</sup>

1 Ephesians 5:19-20

2 Ephesians 5:21

In other words you give yourself to each other in respect for what Jesus has taught us.

You see the Bible teaches that marriage between a man and a woman is very much like the relationship that is between Jesus and the Church. The Church is often called the Bride of Christ. Would it be right for the Church to run off and worship some other false god for a little while? What if it was fun? What if it felt good? Would that make it okay? What would Jesus think? What would Jesus feel if we used this church building, and this altar here, to worship some other god?

What do you think a husband or wife feels when their spouse runs off with someone else for a little while? What if it was fun? What if it felt good? Would that make it okay?

You see Jesus is our example. What did Jesus do for His Church? How much did He love His Church? He chose to die for His Bride, so that we would be safe; so that we would have a good place to live. That is how a man should protect his bride.

When I conduct marriages here I ask the man if he is willing to swear before God, and everyone watching, that he would be prepared to die to protect and care for the woman being placed in his care.

Ladies, would you respect a guy who loved you and cherished you so much that he would risk his own life to protect you, to keep you safe? It takes a real man to be willing to protect those whom he loves with his own life. That is one of the biggest differences between a boy and a man. Men protect, provide and support. Boys gossip and tear down. Jesus is our example. Jesus protects us and provides for us. He did that by dying for us.

This commandment is about respect for yourself, and respect for each other. That is why it is such an important commandment. Is that what you see on TV? Is that what you see in the world around us? Is that what everyone else tells you marriage is about? They say marriage is about what you get. They say its about what you want it to be. They say its about what you make it. It is none of those things. Marriage is about what God said it should be.

You see real love between a man and woman is an on-purpose kind of thing. It is you choosing your path under God's guidance. It is not something that controls you. Marriage is not based on out-of-control love that makes you do what it wants. Real love is love that is controlled. It is controlled by what God says is good for a man and woman when they get married.

Do you see how different marriage and love are in the Church compared to how the world outside defines it? Do you see how the definition the God gives is so much better? So much stronger? So much more powerful? It is that way because when Jesus is at the center of all that you do, God's blessings are also at the center of all that you do.

That is why Luther described this commandment by saying:

We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

The Bible says:

Whoever finds a wife finds something good,  
and has obtained favor from the LORD.<sup>3</sup>

I know that is true because I have a wife that is wonderful to me. She is a God fearing, Proverbs 31 woman, and a true blessing to my life.

The love and respect you show for each other is the most important thing you will ever have with each other. That is why God teaches us to do the right thing. Young ladies should respect the man she will marry even before she meets him. In the same way young men should respect the woman he will marry even before he meets her. You show that respect by not cheating on them, even before you meet them. You should:

Place yourselves under each other's authority out of  
respect for Christ.<sup>4</sup>

In other words give yourself only to each other. Save yourself only for each other. That is one of the greatest act of love you can show to another person. Jesus didn't give His life for all the other religions. We don't worship all the other gods. Jesus gave Himself for us alone! We give ourselves only to Jesus. Marriage is the same way. This commandment is about showing respect and honor to the person that you will marry, and promise to love, before God.

We might think: "What's the point in teaching our kids this stuff. They're going to do it anyway." That might be true. In fact they're going to sin in all sorts of ways. Should we just let them run wild, teach them no morality at all, and let them live any kind of corrupt way they can contrive? Of course not.

3 Proverbs 18:22

4 Ephesians 5:21

The fact that you are going to sin doesn't change the fact that it is still sin. We should teach others to do the right thing, and expect them to do the right thing, and there should be consequences for doing the wrong thing, even if it is the same wrong thing you might have done.<sup>5</sup>

This commandment comes down to this. Any kind of intimacy outside of marriage is sin. That can mean just looking too long at someone and having intimate thoughts and desires. Job, a man of faith declared:

I have made an agreement with my eyes.  
Then how can I look with lust at a young woman?  
What would God above do?<sup>6</sup>

We generally think of adultery as cheating on your spouse, but adultery is actually any kind of intimacy outside of marriage.

Marriage was created by God for three reasons:

- 1) So that we are not alone.
- 2) So that man and woman might find pleasure in each other.
- 3) So that through the two becoming one, one more might come into being.  
(In other words for children.)

You find this even in the definition of the words like: husband, wife, and marriage.

- The original meaning of the word 'husband' is: to plant something that it may grow. You would 'husband' a field with corn.
- The original meaning of the word 'wife' is: to bear or carry life.
- The original meaning of the word 'marriage' is: to take a woman to be the mother of your children.

I suppose this brings in another subject concerning those who find themselves attracted to individuals like themselves. We are finding our country redefining these words to mean something else. They suggest that two men, or two women, or now even multiple combinations of relationships, are marriage. The position might be, "God made me that way. I was born this way, so it must be God's desire for me."

That is really not a very solid foundation on which to stand. For example: suppose a person has intimate desires for children and says, "God made me that

<sup>5</sup> 2 Samuel 11:1-12:25 (*David/Bathsheba*) & 2 Samuel 13:1-39 (*Absalom/Tamar*)

<sup>6</sup> Job 31:1-2

way so that makes it ok.” No it doesn’t. A man may have a desire to “sow his wild oats” so to speak. “God made me that way so that makes it okay... to cheat on his wife.” No it doesn’t.

This kind of thought comes from the idea that children are born perfect, and learn to become sinful. They have to learn sin. That is not what the Bible teaches at all. The Bible teaches you were fully sinful before you took your first breath. You were fully sinful before your eyes caught their first glimpse of light.<sup>7</sup> You start out vile, filthy, dirty, sick and sinful. A child of of the serpent.<sup>8</sup> It is Holy Baptism that makes you forgiven, free, pure and holy. A child of God. You start out sinful. God than reaches down and makes you clean.

Not that He makes you sinless. Sin is powerful. It will get you. No matter how hard you try, no matter how much you study your Bible, no matter how often you come to church, sin will get you. Holy Baptism doesn’t make you sinless. It makes you forgiven. It is because of that gracious, precious, tender love that God shows, that we strive to stop sinning, that we strive to be better, that we strive to be obedient, even though we know we cannot ever fully succeed. We do that because God first loved us.<sup>9</sup>

Since we know we will fail, what’s the point in trying? Since thinking a sin makes you just as guilty as doing a sin, why not just do it and have fun in this life. St. Paul put it this way:

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?<sup>10</sup>

We must be in a constant battle with our sinful desires, no matter what they might be. We are to always strive to obtain the perfection that God demands. It is through faith that these things are accomplished. Faith produces good works.<sup>11</sup> That’s what God means by “put on the full armor of God.<sup>12</sup>”

Is it right for a man who is married to a woman to say, “Well I am married to her, and I love her, but this is the way that I am, and so I will not only lust, but I will act out on that lust, and she should just love me anyway, and society should respect me anyway, and they should tell me I am right, because this is just who I am.” Is that right? No, of course not.

7 Psalm 51:5

8 Genesis 3:15

9 1 John 4:19

10 Romans 6:1-2

11 James 2:17

12 Ephesians 6:11

Here is a question for you. Is the Bible true? Is the Bible God's Word, or is it just good stories? Is the Bible true? Is the Bible true even if no one believes it? Does the truth of Scripture remain true even if everyone say it is not? Do we define truth by our own ideas or is truth God's design?

As Christians, we are not who we make ourselves to be. We are who God make us, though His Holy Word, His Holy Absolution, His Holy Baptism and His Holy Supper. It is through these "Means of Grace" that God conforms us to Him. We do not shape God into what we want Him to be. He shapes us into what He wants us to be.

So we do not peruse adulterous (meaning: outside of marriage) relationships because God has said that intimacy is only for a man and a woman in marriage. To be a Christian is to hate sin, not to pursue sin with joy.

To be a Christian is to understand that our sin condemns us to Hell, but Christ has been condemned for us. That is why we look forward to the Last Day, the Day of Judgment, because on that day, as a child of God, we will finally be free of this incessant plague of sin that haunts us every day of our life. On that day we will finally love everyone as we should, for the first time in our cursed – but then blessed – life.

With the knowledge that Christ died for our sins, so that we are now dead to sin, how can we live in sin, with pleasure, any longer?

Either adultery, of every and any kind, is a sin for which Christ died, and forgives, or it's not. The danger is when you start to think that certain forms of adultery are not sin, and therefore we do not need forgiveness for them. In coming to that conclusion you have just told Jesus you do not want or need forgiveness for your sins.

It doesn't matter if you think it is sin or is not. What matters is what Jesus says, because Jesus has always been, and will always be, the way and the truth. He is the only place we can find forgiveness.<sup>13</sup>

Marriage was defined by God to explain His relationship to His Church, which He describes as His bride. So it is important for all to hear that the Church should not hate those who sin. Nor should the Church accept sin as good, while professing to be a Christian. It is utterly against the Bible, and against the will of the Christ who died for you. You can not say, I am a Christian, I willingly practice and pursue sin.

13 John 14:6



To sin purposefully, to pursue sin joyfully, is to not be a Christian, even if you say that you are. It is one thing to struggle with sin, to come here each week and bow before our God admitting your sins and begging His forgiveness. That is repentance, but repentance is also seeking to change the way we think and act. That is done, Jesus says, through prayer and fasting.<sup>14</sup>

To say I'm going to sin, and I don't care what you think, is to sin against the Holy Spirit.<sup>15</sup> To not believe. To say that you are Scripture's truth, and not Jesus who is the Truth. We are to:

walk by the Spirit, [so] you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.<sup>16</sup>

You were given freedom, but do not use your freedom as an excuse to sin, as an excuse to let your sinful desires rule over you.<sup>17</sup> Don't submit to the slavery to sin from which Jesus redeemed you.

Galatians 5:19-20 say:

The works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>18</sup>

Scripture is very clear on this subject. Those who joyfully engage in such things will be bared from Heavens doors. You will be eternally condemned. God has said that plainly.

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions

14 Mark 9:29

15 Mark 3:29

16 Galatians 5:16-17

17 1 Corinthians 6:12

18 Galatians 5:19-21

and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.<sup>19</sup>

That is the key, because the moment we would say, “I’m going to live for sin” is the moment that you decided that Christ died for nothing. He wasted His time, because you love your sin, more than the living God who loves you.

That should terrify us as we live in a culture that thinks it is worthless to acknowledge God. The result is God allows their own immoral minds to control them.<sup>20</sup> God turns the culture over to itself so that through the sick stain of sin it might see the filth we live in, and turn to God to change, or run full bore at that sin and: die as a society, and die eternally as individuals.

As Christians in this corrupt culture we are called to stand out. To look different, and to accept the ridicule and contempt of those who pursue sin with joy. Even when we are attacked. Those attacks are coming. This is happening even in churches today. In fact it is happening in churches right here around us. Where pastor’s are attacked, lied about, gossiped about, accused of all sorts of things. Where those in the congregation that are telling lies about their pastor, and attacking him, are rewarded and protected, and the pastor is punished for calling out sin for what it is. Listen to what the Bible says to pastors:

I solemnly call on you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge those who are living, and those who are dead. I do this because Christ Jesus will come to rule the world. Be ready to spread the Word at all times. Point out errors, warn people who are sinning, and encourage those who do well. Be very patient when you teach.

A time will come when people will not listen to faithful teachings. Instead, they will follow their own desires, and surround themselves with teachers who tell them what they want to hear.

People will refuse to listen to the truth and turn to lies, but you must keep a clear head in everything. Endure suffering. Do the work of a missionary. Devote yourself completely to your work.<sup>21</sup>

19 Galatians 5:22-25

20 Romans 1:28

21 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (*Paraphrased*)

In one generation of cohabitation, and reckless promiscuous adultery, we see a gigantic push in our culture for even more dishonorable passions. Hear what Scripture says will happen in such a culture.

Their women have exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. Likewise, their men have given up natural relations with women and burn with lust for each other. Men commit indecent acts with men, so they experience among themselves the punishment they deserve for their perversion.

And because they thought it was worthless to acknowledge God, God allowed their own immoral minds to control them. So they do these indecent things. Their lives are filled with all kinds of sexual sins, wickedness, and greed. They are mean. They are filled with envy, murder, quarreling, deceit, and viciousness.

They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, haughty, arrogant, and boastful. They think up new ways to be cruel. They don't obey their parents, they don't have any sense, don't keep promises, and don't show love to their own families, or mercy to others.

Although they know God's judgment, that those who do such things deserve to die eternally, they not only do these things but also approve of others who do them.<sup>22</sup>

Is it fair to say the judgment of God is falling upon us? Its affects are being seen more and more prevalently even in churches. We cannot stand when we spit in the face of God. Nations always think they cannot fall, and God can't do anything about it.

Egypt thought that.  
Assyria though that.  
Babylon thought that.  
Syria thought that.  
Greece though that.  
Rome though that.  
France thought that.  
England thought that.

22 Romans 1:26-32 (*Paraphrased*)

America thinks that now.

What can we do? We can know, and teach to our children another righteousness has been preached from Heaven. One other than the righteousness earned through works or opinions. One that fulfills the righteousness of the Law by one righteous Man, Jesus Christ Himself, who we nailed to a cross.

He is the One who bestowed on us goodness, not because of who we are, or what we have done, but by what He did for us. He did that so that by faith we can know on the Last Day we will be absolved, and are already absolved, through faithful repentance. By being Baptized into Christ Jesus we have died with Him, and are raised with Him.

What should we say then? Should we continue to sin so that God's kindness will increase? That's unthinkable!

As far as sin is concerned we have died. So how can we still willingly, and joyfully, live under sin's influence any longer?<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, never let sin rule your physical body so that you obey its desires. Never offer any part of your body to sin's power. No part of your body should ever be used to do any ungodly thing.

Instead, offer yourselves to God as people who have come back from death, and are now alive. Offer all the parts of your body to God. Use them to do everything that God approves of. Certainly, sin should not have power over you because you are not controlled by God's laws, but by God's favor.

Then what is the implication? Should we sin because we are not controlled by God's laws but by God's favor? That's unthinkable!

Don't you know that if you offer to be someone's slave, you must obey that master? Either your master is sin, or your master is obedience. Letting sin be your master leads to death. Letting obedience be your master leads to God's approval.

23 Romans 6:1-2 (*Paraphrase*)

You were slaves to sin, but I thank God that you have become wholeheartedly obedient to the teachings which you were given. Freed from sin, you were made slaves who do what God approves of.<sup>24</sup>

That means we should, we must, pursue what the Ten Commandments teach. It is at times hard to hear. It is at times uncomfortable to hear God's Law, but if we fail to hear it, if we fail to teach it to our children, we should not expect God to give us the grace of salvation.

May our God give us the wisdom and ability to live as He would direct us to live, and teach our children as He would have us teach them. So that the generations to follow us will follow us to Heaven's home.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

**Proclaim God's Word,  
Encourage one another in faith,  
Witness to God's love and  
Serve all people**



24 Romans 6:12-18 (Paraphrase)